

The Church School Teacher

Volume XIX

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Number 6



"Forward in Parish Education. Come, Learn, Serve With Us."

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MAGAZINE FOR CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

VOL. XIX

No. 6

JUNE 1950

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The Church School Teacher

Vol. XIX

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From Your Director

By L. H. WESTBERG
Augustana Lutheran Church

In This Issue

WITH the June issue we take our leave until September. There will be no issue of THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER in July and August.

The June issue directs your attention to the fall Parish Education Month emphasis. (See details under the columns of your directors.) This issue features the quarterly helps for teaching the *Christian Growth Series, Fourth Quarter*. Find the article for your department, and let it be a starter in your advance preparations for July, August, and September.

Summer months tax the teacher's ability to shift lesson plans upon a second's notice. Only thorough preparation enables the teacher to adjust the lesson to fit vacation month situations.

First Teach, Then Assign

Basic to making summertime adaptations is the *Christian Growth Series* method of teaching a lesson before making any assignment on it. Teachers, stick to this method! Do not throw the burden of preparation upon the pupils by assigning a new lesson for the next Sunday and asking them to come prepared to recite.

First teach the lesson, then make assignments from it. *Christian Growth Series* lessons are designed to be first taught by the teacher. After the lesson is taught the assignments are given to the pupils. *First the lesson is taught. Then the assignments are made.*

Teacher Is Important

When this *Christian Growth Series* method is used the teacher motivates the pupils to learn, helps

them to learn, and sends them home with sufficient background to give them a satisfying experience of completing an assignment.

Dare I say it once more? First, teach the lesson. Second, make your assignments after the lesson is taught.

Summer Workshops

Last month we said there would be a more complete list of this summer's workshops and institutes. Here is that list. Choose the one best suited to your convenience and make your plans to attend. You will be rewarded by the pleasant experience of the workshop itself as well as by increased affectiveness in teaching.

May 6-7. Worcester, Mass.

June 22-24. Chicago, Ill.

June 30-July 2. East Orange, N. J.

July 7-9. Kane, Pa.

July 20-23. Seattle, Wash.

July 28-30. St. Paul Minn. (A special workshop for demonstration teachers)

August 3-6. Spokane, Wash.

August 10-13. Portland, Oregon.

August 21-25. St. Peter, Minn.

August 27-Sept. 2. Illinois Conference Church Workers' Institute at Camp Augustana, Lake Geneva, Wis.

September 3-4. Lindsborg, Kans.

Parish Education Month

Sample materials for the 1950 Parish Education Month will be sent out early this year—in June, perhaps—to give you plenty of time to plan for the observance of the month in your particular church. The samples will include a poster and four tracts. The theme for the month is "Forward in Parish Education. Come, Learn, Serve with Us." For an explanation of this theme, read Director Vogeley's column in this issue.

The packets of samples will be sent to pastors and Sunday-school general secretaries. We hope your school staff will meet early in the summer to lay plans for making your congregation and community aware of your church school through Parish Education Month.

Vacation Church School

There is still time to put finishing touches on your preparation for Vacation Church School. It gives one pause to realize that teaching hours in the average Vacation Church School day equals a month, in some cases two months, of Sunday-school teaching time.

If your church is not taking advantage of these precious vacation hours, make yourself responsible for getting a Vacation Church School started this summer.

Direct from the Director

By R. A. VOGEELEY
American Lutheran Church

Vacation Church Schools

WITH our new material, "My Christian Faith," and with greater interest in making fuller use of summer hours for Christian education, your Board of Parish Education sincerely hopes that this year will mark a new high in the number of Vacation Church Schools throughout the American Lutheran Church, in the enrollment at those church schools, and in the quality of work in each school.

New Filmstrip

The office has two prints of a slide film entitled, "It Can Happen in Summer." This filmstrip has been prepared by the committee on Vacation Church Schools of the International Council of Religious Education. In a congregation which has never had a vacation church school it can be used in order to encourage interest in the possibility of such a school. If you care to use this, write to the office.

We also want to look forward in 1951 to the 50th Anniversary cele-

bration of the Vacation Church School movement in America.

*"Forward in Parish Education.
Come, Learn, Serve with Us"*

If you have attended a Spring Church School Association Rally you have heard of the plans for promoting with new vigor the Parish Education program this fall.

Forward. This is a call to action. The theme invites all members of the church and those beyond the church to "Come, Learn, and Serve with Us" who are teaching and who are continuing to learn through regular Bible study.

Come with Us is not a new emphasis. It is a constant emphasis on evangelism. It is repeating what we said in 1949, namely "God's Word for All." In 1948 it was the standard, "Constantly Growing." In 1947 it was the "300,000 Question." The question still stands: "Will we have 300,000 in our Sunday church schools by the end of 1950?" It seems to be an impossible goal at this time. But if more Sunday schools continue to increase twenty to thirty or even

forty per cent, we will at least approximate our goal. Here is one case where not *failure*, but *low aim* is crime. The Great Commission still applies to "all."

Learn With Us. Learning begins at home. The church's specific task and obligation begins with the nursery class. In 1947 the American Lutheran Church reported 23,889 baptisms. This is our potential nursery class enrollment for the fall of 1950. You have read about the new nursery course that will be ready for use this fall. This course will be explained at our District Institutes. If you can not attend an institute and desire further information about the nursery course, please write to the Board of Parish Education.

Adult Potential

The American Lutheran Church still has a tremendous potential for its senior-adult division. In 1948 there was an unreached potential of 398,309 confirmed members who were not in Sunday school either as pupils or teachers. A teaching church must teach everyone.

Serve with Us. Dedicated service is one of the fruits of Christian service. More and more people who know Christ as their Saviour should be willing to say, "Here am

I, send me!" Special training, however, is required. Our Church is ready to give this special training. Each congregation can give it. Our Church needs approximately five thousand new teachers in our church schools every year. Therefore many of our congregations should have a constant program of teacher training in the form of a preservice training course so that each church has a supply of trained teachers to carry on this important phase of its work.

In-Service Courses

For all of the regular teachers we have our in-service training courses. These courses may be taught at district or zone institutes or in the local congregation.

In the year 1949 we had a great increase in the number of In-Service and Preservice Training Courses. In 1949 the Board sent out 50 percent more syllabi than in 1948. It also issued approximately 50 percent more course-credit cards than the year before. We know that many people took the work and did not receive official credit for it. We are interested that when people do the work, that work should also be acknowledged. But the real purpose of the training is to have better and more effective teaching in every congregation.

Meetings for Administrators

At the time when this column was prepared, plans were being drawn up for the first of a series of church-wide meetings for our Sunday-school officers and members of Parish Education Committees. The first meeting will be held this fall. These meetings will be called and sponsored by members of the District Parish Education Committees. Materials will be prepared and sent quarterly so that pastors, superintendents, officers and committee members may discuss the problems involved in church school administration, that they may share with fellow workers their problems and solutions, and that they may know the future plans and materials which will be available from our offices.

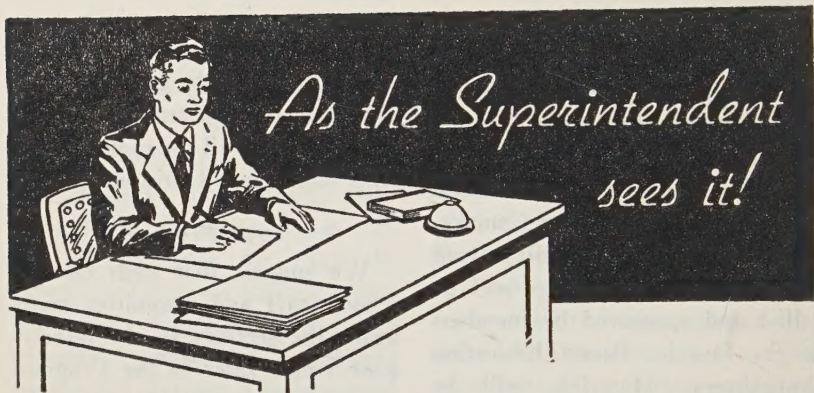
In some places these meetings may be a supper meeting. Since in some schools the superintendent receives very little acknowledgment of the services he renders, it would be a fine gesture indeed if the Sunday school paid his expenses at the meeting. In other places at least two of these meetings may be held in connection with regular Church School Association Rallies.

As we prepare to enter the second half of this century we can be very sure that many of the pro-

grams of education which were quite adequate in 1910, or even in 1920, will not be adequate if the church is to be a teaching church in the midst of all the present problems which face Christians.

1950 Program

We suggest that each church-school staff and committee study again the sections in the *Source-book* which refer to the Program of Education. Study again the *Standards* to see how your school can be improved. Make plans for strengthening your program this fall through a weekday church-school program for the children of your church. An experimental course, "The Story of My A. L. C.," will be ready for use this fall. In fifteen lessons it presents graphically the highlights in the history of the American Lutheran Church. This course is especially pertinent in 1950 when we celebrate the 20th anniversary of our American Lutheran Church. For further information about this course, which can be used with the Junior Mission Band meeting once a week, or with your own released-time after school or Saturday program, write to the Board of Parish Education directing your request to Mrs. Ella M. Osten, the Children's Division.



Lessons I've Remembered Longest

By W. G. MONTGOMERY

DURING my youthful days I had many good teachers, but the lessons which have lived longest and influenced me most, are those which came mainly out of the heart, and not merely out of the head. Nor is this fact any argument against intellectual ability.

The teacher can never know too much. I probably emphasize intellectual equipment more than does the average person, as a requisite for good teaching. But mental alertness is not enough. In my own experience I have discovered that teaching which has no heart in it will soon be forgotten.

Must Like Teaching

It is next to impossible to teach something successfully which one does not live. What one is will come out sooner or later regardless of what he says, and this is what the student remembers longest.

At least, I have found this true in my own case in going back in memory to my own teachers. And because this fact is fundamental in all good teaching, I would like to make some observations here on the kind of lessons that live longest, either for good or evil in the lives of the students.

I am now sure that the teacher's life is the biggest lesson he will ever teach, and this is often given out at the very time he is thinking about it. That is, his strongest teaching will be indirect, almost unconscious on his part.

For example, if a teacher does not believe the Bible, or if he disbelieves parts of it, this will come out in his teaching in spite of all the pains he takes to conceal it. And it is the very lesson the teacher does not want to impart that roots itself in the minds of students and lives on.

Odd Moment Teaching

The teacher can easily hurt his influence by unwise suggestions about things he is not sure of. He may forget that the lessons remembered longest are sometimes given outside the class, or in odd moments when he becomes careless with sacred things.

I once knew a minister who would preach great sermons on Sunday and ruin all he said on the streets on Monday. And yet he was a good man, as sincere as I have ever known, but not using tact in meeting and talking with people on the streets and in the homes, he would build one day and tear down the next. Now, teaching, too, may be like that, the bad sug-

gestions being remembered and the good lessons forgotten.

We often influence people most when least expecting to do so. I am almost certain that the most lasting influence either for good or bad is the kind we exert upon others without knowing it, but they know it, feel it, and do not forget it.

Just here is a phase of teaching some of us overlook, resulting in impressions we did not reckon with. One may master all the methods of teaching, possess excellent techniques, be naturally gifted, and yet, forgetting this one thing, he may negate all his good teaching by suggestive remarks in moments when he does not expect to influence anybody.

Moses, an Example

Even Moses, great as he was, did not know the exact time when his life was speaking loudest for good. When he came down from the Mount after communing with God, it is said that "the skin of his face shone." He did not know his face was shining, but the people knew it. They saw God reflected in his countenance.

This elemental fact explains why it is so hard to hurt the pure life by misrepresentation on the one hand, or prop up the impure life

very long, on the other. One's real self will come out eventually despite all the tricks used to conceal it. The sophist, or the insincere person may pass for something other than what he is for a little while, but even though he put on the hairy skin of Esau, his voice will be that of Jacob, and in no great time his real nature will come out.

Teaching With the Heart

In the long run, a teacher will be rated not only by what he knows, but also by what he is. While most of my own life has been given to teaching others, I was also taught by others, and going back to the days when I was a student, I must confess that some of my most brilliant teachers have influenced my life the least. This was not because they used their heads, but because they did not use their hearts.

Their intellect was profound, their logic keen, but they showed little or no warmth, or feeling, or faith in what they said or taught. Probably I went away with a little more knowledge, but with no faith to put it into practice. Other teachers, not nearly so intellectual, inspired me with hopes and dreams divine that still drive me on. And this experience has led me to be-

lieve that the teacher's heart is probably more important than his head. To possess both is the ideal combination. But I would rather see in a teacher more inspiration and less information, than all the knowledge in the world with no spiritual power.

The person who lives as best he can what he teaches, is not likely to exert a wrong influence. But constantly he must be watchful of himself with reference to idle talk, stray bits of gossip, or unkind criticism which he may take part in without meaning harm.

Control Temper

Others may hear him, see, and misjudge him as to motives when he is wholly innocent of any intended harm. And for this they may criticise him, which will not hurt him unless he strikes back. But it is always a bad lesson the teacher leaves when he loses his temper or takes revenge against anyone.

Do by your critics, if you have any, as Ole Bull, the great violinist, did by his enemies when they wanted to ruin his reputation. When offered the columns of a big New York newspaper to defend himself against the slander, he replied, "No, no, while dey talk gainst me, I'll play gainst dem." That is all he did, and he won.

The music of a good life is always louder than opposition against it.

Love the Students

Again, the teacher who really loves people will always have a hearing. A teacher one day touched the shoulders of a poor, drunken sot, and said, "You have great ability if you would only use it for God." That was all, and it was enough, because that fallen man did know that this teacher loved him. That drunken man, deserted by society, despised by some, spending much of his time in jail, rose up to become one of America's greatest orators and temperance workers. His name was John B. Gough. Because this one teacher loved a fallen man enough to lift him while others had forsaken him, hundreds of thousands of others were turned from the saloons to salvation. Those are the teachers whose lives live on.

There was once a school for training ministers which was conducted by a famous preacher and teacher. One day he said to his students, "Let us go out and preach today."

Supposing he was going to some church, they started out, following him. He kept walking round and round over the city, along the main streets, into back alleys,

through the slums, stopping nowhere and saying nothing. Finally, one of the students said, "Master, I thought we were going somewhere to preach." The teacher replied: "We have been preaching. We have been seen, observed, our message made plain." And then he added, "There is no need of walking somewhere to preach unless we preach as we walk."

Now, the same thing is true of the church-school teacher. He teaches as he walks, whether he intends to or not. And he teaches most when he does not intend to. He is observed wherever he goes. His words have weight, and even when silent, his influence goes out. And many of the lessons that live longest and influence others most will be those he is not conscious of at the time.

Anyway, those are the lessons that meant most to me. As I sit down today and recall my teachers one by one, of those I remember I find that the only lessons I can remember are those which came out of their lives, not out of their heads, but out of their hearts, warm, tender and true. Those lessons linked me to something dynamic and divine, the flesh and blood and spirit sort that still live with me today.

Helps for Teachers of Seniors

Christian Growth Series, Senior III, Fourth Quarter

By ALBERTA PETERSON

*Assistant to the Director, Board of Parish Education
Augustana Lutheran Church*

THERE are great compensations in receiving an assignment to write one of these magazine columns. Of necessity the writer must read the *entire* Study Book as well as its handmaid, The Teacher's Guide, in order to offer a handful of intelligent helps to those who would teach the new quarterly. Being a Sunday-school teacher myself, I have reason to believe that we do not always read those two books from cover to cover before we begin earnestly to teach Lesson 1. But there is a joy and a beauty in attacking the new quarterly with the kind of abandon that keeps you going to the last page. It is the joy of seeing the wholeness of the study. Only as you read the whole quarterly do you see the master plan and the sub plans in the mind of the author.

Senior III, Fourth Quarter, is unique in that it is the last of the

Senior quarterlies to be published. Like its predecessors, this book, Christ in New Testament History and Letters, will have a freshness about it that invites the teacher to dip into its pages to spiritually refresh the young people in post-confirmation classes.

The Quarterly Summarizes

The author of the quarterly, Dr. Paul M. Lindberg, has a significant purpose in mind for this closing quarterly. He states it thus: "To give the senior not only a final review of the Bible work of the entire Series, but also a permanent appraisal of the significance of the whole Bible as the Book of Christ." To accomplish this aim the author takes the student in hasty review through the entire New Testament. The opening lesson deals with Christ's work through the Holy Spirit, and continues with apostolic activity and the strength of the early church because of the

single faith and single purpose of the apostles. After the students have seen the blessedness of this "fellowship of saints," then successive lessons show how Christ works in and through the individual. It is seen in such stalwart early Christians as Stephen, Peter, and Paul—Christ working in each of them. So much for a summary.

"Depart to Serve"

Now for a word about the people who will be hearing these lessons. They are the teenagers, the age group possessing the greatest potential in our church today. The author of this quarterly knew that, when he made the lessons conform to these youth. When you see the over-all pattern of the thirteen lessons, you see also the mold in which all have been cast. The theme? That these young people may "depart to serve." Early in the quarter, a pennant with this message could very appropriately be flung across the classroom and a strong finger be pointed to it at the close of every class period.

Throughout this quarterly there will be marvelous opportunities to sound out young people for full-time service with the church. Paul might have been successful in a dozen professions, but he chose the high calling and became a travel-

ing preacher. Stephen was a man of the finest fiber. God needed him. At intervals the teacher can sew through a correlating thread, for from lesson to lesson, from Peter to Titus, the same high qualifications are demanded wherever God needs a worker. The alert teacher will bring in the great Christian heroes of this day, Niemoller, to name only one, and will show that the world today is still in need of men and women who will dare to live and dare to die for Christ.

Vital Questions

Teen-agers love to talk. In fact, they almost defy you to stop them. (We may as well admit it on paper. We know in reality it is true.) Here is a golden time to channel their discussions into worth-while talk. Really vital questions turn up in every lesson. Here are a few samples: If, like Stephen, you found your physical life trapped because of your faith, what would you do? (Lesson 3.) The Church has prospered most when it was pressed the most. Should we pray for an ordeal to hit our church in America? (Lesson 4.) What is it that makes a life truly Christian? Does it depend on how many times the name of Christ is mentioned? (Lesson 11.) We agree that sal-

vation is for all, but do our actions show that we believe it? (Lesson 7.) Is it character alone that matters or must we consider reputation as well? (Lesson 9.)

The Approach Is Important

Teachers of seniors may sigh with satisfaction because there is no need for them to lie awake nights conjuring up motivating schemes to capture their students' interests. Perhaps, but I daresay that the teacher who occasionally does have such a dream will be paid off in "listening dividends." Here are two suggestions for putting wings into the first moments of your class period. When you begin Lesson 6, for example, you are teaching "Christ in the Christian Congregation." Imperfect as it is, the church has continuously expanded through the years. There is only one explanation: the presence of Christ working in the church. Perhaps in your own sanctuary, there hangs that striking painting, "The Presence," by Borthwick. A few well-chosen words about the painting will open the door into the lesson and will put into the picture a new glow which the students, and perhaps the teacher, have never observed before.

Many of our teen-agers are actively interested in music groups in

the public school. It is a fine thing to look for carry-overs into our church-school work. Several of these lessons stress the role of song in the lives of the early Christians. Lesson 8 points up Paul's "songs in the night." There is splendid opportunity to make a music approach to Lesson 12 in which the subject is the Book of Revelation. The beauty of the new things in Christ as told there has inspired such grand music as that by Handel. Bring a record player into the classroom on the day of Lesson 12, and introduce the brief overview of Revelation by playing the Hallelujah Chorus. The class will listen better that Sunday.

Catechism Review

There is a good deal of Catechism review, and each memory selection springs naturally from the lesson for the day. Make every effort to make the Catechism meaningful to the students. The fact that they are past confirmation does not mean they know these catechetical truths. And yet here is a perfect time, for example, to teach "He ascended into heaven . . ." right along with the Hallelujah Chorus. The truth is majestic and thrilling. Our students, too, must come to know that truth through their teachers.

As the lessons develop, the students will have constant occasion to be looking up Scripture passages in their Bibles. By now this should be an easy and a much-loved practice. Encourage the students to carry Pocket Testaments and to make

remembering them another good Christian habit.

A reminder to those who enjoy teaching with visual aids. "The Creed" is available in filmstrip, and will, of course, enrich the work of this quarter.

Helps for Teachers of Intermediates

*Christian Growth Series, Intermediate III,
Fourth Quarter*

By PAULINE D. BERGENER

Detroit, Michigan

SO YOU are going on a treasure hunt with your children! What an exciting, interesting, and revealing experience this can be for both teacher and pupil. You, the teacher in this series of lessons, have an excellent opportunity to study each child in the light of his choices and acquaint yourself more fully with his present spiritual understanding and future needs. His interests and the meaningfulness of all that has been taught to him of the Scriptures up to this time, or during the present study, will in large measure determine his choices, as the various trails are opened to him. His attitudes toward

people and events as expressed in his selection of what has value to him, give you a clear insight into his thinking. What he treasures in his own mind and heart gives you a good indication of the character of each child. Which person or persons he selects as a favorite character will be determined entirely on the impact each character has made on his mind and heart. The child's readiness to learn, or his ability to understand the significance of people and events will have a large bearing on his choices. Here the teacher can act as interpreter and as guide to the child's thinking.

Evaluating Standards

Which verse, chapter, Gospel, book of the Bible, story, hymn, or picture the child selects as his or her favorite will depend on the meaning each has for him in terms of his own knowledge and experience. The chief role of the teacher is to widen his horizons, deepen his understanding, and see that he has the right perspective and proper sense of values. What we like in terms of recreation, hobbies, associates, vocations, etc., give tangible evidence of our attitudes. For the child to list his own likes as in Lesson 1, gives him an opportunity to evaluate these in terms of Christian standards. It focuses his attention on his own ideals and makes possible a re-evaluation of their worth in relation to God's standards.

This must surely follow as children have opportunity in Lesson 2 to think of the greatest treasure of all that we have in Jesus our Saviour, the Father's gift of love to all mankind, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2. 3.)

To lend variety in presentation in Lesson 3, children could be asked to list those who in their opinion are the important men and women of the Old and New Test-

aments. Thus each child could blaze a treasure trail of his own. These selections could then be compared with those of the lesson text, but the thinking will have been done by, rather than for, the children. It is very likely that children's lists will name all the people listed in the work book, and it should be of interest to them to see how their choices and the reason for the selection of each, compare with those of the author of their Study Books.

Presenting Bible Characters

When Bible characters are presented to children they should be presented as models with whom the children may identify themselves. One of the most important functions of education is to make it possible for the child to make himself one with people of high Christian ideals and character. And not only in the pages of Scripture but also in real life should the child be able to make himself one with people of high Christian character. Who better than the teacher himself has the power of lasting influence on the mind and heart of his pupil! Example is still stronger than precept.

In Lesson 4 children will select their favorite Bible verses. Since this whole unit is based on the

choice of treasures, it would be well to spend some time in discussion of one of the many passages listed, namely this one, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6. 20-21.) This passage is in fact the basis for all our choices, for "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he," and "a good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matthew 12. 35.)

This lesson is one particularly of interpretation, and the teacher's role is to guide the thinking in such a way that application of the principles involved is made by each child to himself. Lesson 5 presents a series of historical incidents recorded in the Bible that are packed full of dramatic appeal. They should be considered here primarily for the facts they record about people and events, but the significance of the event or occasion should be understood by the child.

In the Psalms, hymns, prayers and pictures presented, we find man's interpretation of his know-

ledge and understanding of God. We find pleasure, comfort, and stimulation in these expressions of man's soul. God does not wish us to become only depositories of his goodness, but we are also to become channels through whom others are brought to Christ. Thus the artist and the poet portray through their mediums the glory, the majesty, and the goodness of God. We are their debtors. However, all of us who call ourselves Christian daily paint pictures to others by our conduct. Ours is a great responsibility, that we so live that others may be drawn to Christ through our influence and example. We may never be able to paint a masterpiece, compose a moving poem, or produce a great musical composition, but our lives can be sermons. We do not live to ourselves alone.

The Bible and the Child

We now come to the last question, "What does the Bible mean to me?" It is important that each child answer this question for himself. One important purpose of all teaching is to lead the child to think constructively. Having given him facts and introduced him to ideas and principles, the child is to select and organize these and come to his own conclusions.

In other words these Bible treasures should now have so taken possession of his mind and heart that the child is able to give a clear statement as to what the Bible as a whole means to him. It would therefore be far more effective for the teacher to arrange for a discussion of this question, and list each child's answer, before the class sees the prepared statements in the text. These could then be added to the list. In other words, it is here suggested that you use the hints on procedure on page 64 in the Study Book in reverse order.

In connection with the constant availability and comparatively

small cost of Bible today, it should be of interest to the children that this year marks the 500th anniversary of the invention of movable type and the Gutenberg press. This probably more than any other single thing made possible the rapid spread of the Reformation, and was an invaluable aid to Luther and the other Reformers in bringing the whole Scripture into the hands of any and all who wanted to own it.

May the life of each one attest to the truth of his profession, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119. 105.)

Of God

Earth and sun and twinkling star—

All from the Hand of God!

Pine and moss and daffodil—

All from the Mind of God!

Mother, love, and Jesus Christ—

All from the Heart of God!

Wrapped in you, my life is trod,

Hand and Mind and Heart of God!

VICTOR E. BECK

from *The Winnowing Years*

Helps for Teachers of Juniors

Christian Growth Series, Junior III, Fourth Quarter

By EVELYN ANDERSON

Messiah Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

IN PREPARATION for this quarter, please read carefully all of the Study Book and the Teacher's Guide of "As We Grow Older" before you start on the first unit. As you read through the material, you can not help but sense your responsibility in guiding these youngsters in their Christian growth. Undergird each class preparation with prayer.

The key to the whole quarter is *discussion*. The author has set up everyday situations which call for a decision of right or wrong by the junior. Be friendly and encourage their questions and opinions. Juniors are now forming attitudes which they will carry on through life. Let them do the talking. How else can you find out what they are thinking? If you find it difficult to conduct a discussion that is interesting and worth while, use the suggested discussion pattern in the Teacher's Guide, page 27. Choose your desired outcome and

be sure the class ends with that outcome, even though the discussion may wander (and it will!)

UNIT A. GOD WANTS JUNIORS TO GROW UP

Juniors want to grow up. The teachers and parents want the juniors to grow up. We probably wonder why "being grown up" is so hard for juniors when nobody seems to be adverse to it. Be patient, yet firm, as they try to be big in such a childish way. There are excellent subjects for discussion in the six lessons of this unit. Do not take up too much precious class time for filling in blanks. It is more necessary that they see the right or Christian choice in everyday situations than the right answer in the book. School is out during this quarter, so feel free to give them homework.

Part of growing up is doing "grown-up" things. Ask the superintendent if your class might take care of the worship period for one

Sunday. You may either have a special class during the week, or plan the worship hour the Sunday before in class. The juniors may divide responsibilities: one announces the hymns, another reads Scripture, prayer might be offered by several, others may dramatize a story, some act as ushers. The idea may catch on and other classes will help. I am sure the superintendent will appreciate the lift. The juniors will develop a sense of responsibility through this act of service, and will probably appreciate the worship period more in the future. Look around for other tasks the juniors may do, for example, taking care of younger children going to and from church school, keeping supplies in order, distributing and collecting the hymnals at each worship period, etc. Do not underestimate the junior!

UNIT B

GOD HIMSELF IS PRESENT

There are only two lessons in this unit. *Please read the Teacher's Guide.* The author states very wisely and clearly the purpose of these two important lessons.

Juniors like *variety*. While studying the lesson, "God Is in the World He Made." you might like to hold your class session outdoors.

Informal discussion about the wonders of nature about them can be woven in very nicely with the lesson material. If it is not feasible to have a class session outdoors, perhaps a hike followed by a picnic lunch on that afternoon can be planned. As part of the next week's assignment, you may ask for a list of different trees, flowers, etc., that were seen on the hike, so that the field trip will have some connection with the lesson for the day.

A trip through a factory would add special meaning to the second lesson of this unit, "God Is in the Things Man Makes." The teacher who works all week may find a factory which operates an evening shift or could make the trip on a Saturday afternoon. Again, a report could be made on the raw material used in the factory, God's part, and man's part in the manufacturing of the product.

UNIT C

WHEN THINGS CHANGE

Again discussion is the key in guiding the juniors to the Christian attitude toward adjustments in school and home life. There are many problems confronting these youngsters in school: relationship of pupil to teacher, to other pupils, etc. Their problems may seem small and petty to adults, but are

not taken so lightly by the juniors. Do not ignore their complaints altogether. *Let them talk it out.* Most likely their problem is petty and once told to another, it will seem so to them, too. Has not the same thing happened to you? A healthy attitude toward school life is important, but rather difficult to cultivate with the popular belief of children and adults that school is a bore and teachers are there only to make life as miserable as possible. Make the most of your time plugging the school and the teachers as the Teacher's Guide suggests.

Visitation Helps

Regular visitation in the homes will help you with the discussion of home life and its changes. Many homes provide unfavorable environment to nurture Christian growth. If the teacher is aware of the conditions in each home, it will be easier for her to understand the junior and his own personal problems. A little encouragement from a church-school teacher will go a long way. *Do not underestimate your influence!*

The third lesson, "Times of Great Trouble," should be presented as thoroughly as possible. The author states, "A prevalent attitude is likely to be that trouble

comes to Christian people as punishment for something wrong they have done. A corresponding idea on the other side of the fence is that God will repay his people for being good by keeping them from worldly wants and trouble." Some where along the way, many youngsters and adults have acquired the idea that God is a super-policeman who is always looking for wrongdoings and meting out punishments for them.

Death and sickness are especially attributed to God's will as means of punishment. It is surprising and disturbing to discover how many adults will calmly say after a tragic death or some calamity, "It is too bad, but it is God's will," and dismiss the matter. Help the junior to develop healthy ideas regarding God's will. Let them do the talking about the various subjects in this lesson. You may find other unchristian attitudes bordering on superstition that need clearing up. Reassure the class that God is love and will never desert them in "time of great trouble."

The author has written detailed accounts of activities to be used for class work. Adapt these suggestions to your class situation as you see fit. Some of the activities can be carried out during discussion.

UNIT D

These two lessons, "How May I Grow More Like Jesus," and "Am I a Christian Now?" are vital to the development of Christian growth. The teacher may take the opportunity in the first lesson of this unit to clear up any vague ideas or unchristian attitudes that have not been taken care of in the preceding lessons. This lesson can be used primarily as a summary. Activities of the last unit may be finished during the class session.

The second lesson of the unit, "Am I a Christian Now?" with

your guidance should help the juniors realize that there are definite steps toward Christian growth, and that they should make some set rules for their personal Christian conduct. The lesson also challenges the junior to be more Christlike every day, as he grows older. We as teachers should also adapt these same principles to our own lives. I am sure we will be better Christian teachers if we make similar rules and abide by them. As we guide these youngsters, let us pray for their Christian growth, and for our Christian growth as well.

Helps for Teachers of Primary Classes

Christian Growth Series, Primary III, Fourth Quarter

By MRS. A. E. WRIGHT

Superintendent, Primary Dept. Martin Luther Church, Youngstown, Ohio

Summer's Challenge

VACATION TIME— what a challenge we have in these next two months when people are heading in all directions for vacations. More than ever we will have to make our Sunday schools interesting. Strive to create in the heart of the child the love for Sunday school, that nothing will be import-

ant enough to interfere with his attendance. Have your Teacher's Guide at hand as we start to study this quarter. Make notes of suggestions that fit your particular group. We will begin on page 4 with a brief review of the Desired Outcomes. Not everything will fit your situation, but we are hoping all may find some help.

Desired Outcomes

1. *Fellowship with God.* Since the first seven lessons are on prayer, let us examine *our* fellowship with God in prayer. In order to do our best in God's work we must keep in communication with him.

2. *Christian Faith.* Our aim is to grow daily in Christian faith, then reflect it in our teaching. Work to develop in the child a true and lasting faith that he will grow more like Jesus every day.

3. *Christian Living.* Live what you learn, for in so doing our knowledge is increased. Fruit showers for sick or shut-ins, visits, gifts for children's homes, sending clothes to the needy in Europe—these are good exercises in Christian living.

4. *Christian Adjustment.* Primary children live, as do we, in a continuously changing world. To maintain poise in facing it is the mark of Christian growth. This poise is maintained, not by confidence in self, but by faith in Christ. Here childhood leads the way. "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

5. *Church Membership.* The children should be taught to real-

ize the church is God's house, a special place for worship. At least twice a year, if possible, they should be taken into the main sanctuary for their opening service, the visit preceded by a short talk about worship and its demand for reverence. Or about the demands of church membership. Point out the many little things they can do at present. The children will be much impressed if they are permitted to march up the aisle to soft music. Perhaps some or all could sit in the choir loft. This has proven to be very worth while. (see Lesson 6.)

6. *Use of the Bible.* Do not underestimate the value of each child owning his own Bible. Many things can be learned about the Bible before the child is able to read well. The child will take great pride in earning his own money to buy his Bible. A small print of one of Sallman's paintings pasted in the front will remind him that Jesus is his Friend. Make use of the Bible in some way every Sunday. Encourage the child to bring his Bible every Sunday. A loose-leaf binder to hold the *Christian Growth Series* leaflets will help preserve them.

7. *Use of Christian Resources.* Are we availing ourselves of the

wealth of material that will help us to become better teachers? Primary teachers should meet once a month for the study and planning of their lessons. The syllabus, *A Leadership Guide for Teachers of Primary Children*, will make a fine beginning, or use some of the recommended books such as *Understanding Children* by Lewis J. Sherrill, and *The Best Possible Sunday School* by W. E. Schutte. Many problems can be discussed and solved at such meetings.

How Shall I Do It? (page 5)

Before the Opening. Take advantage of this precious time to get better acquainted with the children. By looking at the new shoes, the sore finger, hearing about the new puppy, things so important to the child, we gain his confidence. By proving our interest in the child we win his love. Once a child loves you he will accept your teachings. A Sunday-school teacher must make up for all the lacks in the child's life. What a responsible position!

Bible Reading. Once the child has the thrill of owning his own Bible he will delight in looking up and reading references. Write the Scripture reading for the day on the blackboard. As the children arrive they may find it. Let the

class, or an individual, read it aloud.

Singing. This is important. Children this age really like to sing. They like action. Therefore have some exercise songs in your collection. With a little thought, motions can be worked out for each line of a song. Marching to a song like "Onward, Christian Soldiers" helps to relieve tension. (Recommended before going to class.) Be on the lookout for songs suitable for your group. Loose songs may be mounted on cardboard, convenient for the pianist. Sing a few lively songs while the tardy ones take their seats. Mounted pictures which illustrate each thought in the song can be held before the group as they sing. A suggested method for learning is to print the words on the board. Choose songs with a meaning the children can and do understand.

Hospitality to Visitors

New Pupils and Visitors. Make the new pupils or visitors feel at home and happy. Have a special welcome song to sing as they come up front. A gift of a little book or marker will mean much to them. It might be just a cross cut from some art paper with the words, WELCOME TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL, and a Bible verse such as

Psalm 122. 1. Something similar may be given to the one who brought the visitor. During the week send a suitable card to tell the visitor how happy you were to have him in your class. To the new member send a card and follow this with a phone call to arrange for a visit. Prove to the parents you are interested in the child. Check absentees. It means much to the child to know he was missed. Impress upon the parents that each child is important and is missed every time he is absent.

Offering. If you use the envelope system, highly recommended, the chairs can be arranged with a center aisle and the offering received as in church while music is played. After the offering is brought forward sing or pray a suitable prayer. The children will love to do this and are learning some of the duties they may later perform in church.

Birthdays. It takes but little time to recognize the birthdays of the past week. Have the birthday children come up front and sing "Happy Birthday," followed by a prayer such as:

Our Father in heaven, we thank Thee that (child's name) has reached another birthday.

We thank Thee for taking care of him all through the year.

May Thy special blessings be upon him today, and through the year to come.

Keep (child's name) well and strong and help him to grow more like Jesus every day.

In Thy dear name we pray.
AMEN.

Have something in the form of a button or tag to give him. If you use an altar he may light the candles.

Flannelgraph. What a marvelous aid in our teaching! The children love it. It really makes the Bible story live. There is no limit to the ways in which it can be used. My personal preference is for Pict-O-Graph material.

UNIT A.

FOR WHOM DO WE PRAY?

May our own prayer life be increased as we study these lessons on prayer. In these lessons we have an excellent opportunity to teach the child the nearness of God. Aim to make him feel as much at ease while talking to God, his heavenly Father, as he would while talking to his earthly father. In order that the child may fully understand the meaning of prayer it is suggested an outline be used similar to:

What is prayer? Talking to God.

Ways in which we can pray. Aloud, silently, singing.

Where can we pray? Anywhere. Mention some of the places Jesus prayed.

When? Any time. Jesus prayed in the morning, Mark 1. 35; all night, Luke 6. 12.

How should we pray? Forgiving, Mark 11. 25-26. Believing, Matthew 21. 22.

Does God hear us when we pray? Yes, if we are sincere.

Does God always answer prayer? Yes, though not always when and in the way we expect.

Have these references assigned to children and as you ask the question it may be answered with the Bible verse. Repeating this outline each Sunday will help to instill in the child the real meaning of prayer.

Practice the various methods of prayer. Open the service by singing a well-known prayer hymn such as "Come into My Heart,"

or "Father, We Thank Thee for the Night." Follow with a moment's silent prayer.

UNIT B.

JESUS WITH US EVERYWHERE

In Unit A we have laid the foundation for Unit B. When we have developed in the child the faith and trust in God through prayer he will begin to realize Jesus is with us at all times in all places. With a child's free expression in prayer begins his growth in the awareness of God's presence.

Though we can not understand how Jesus can be with all people at the same time, we are willing to accept this as fact because He told this in very simple words. (Matthew 28. 20) Jesus did not utter idle words. We believe Jesus is with us:

When things change.

When there is someone new in the home.

When we move.

When we can not have everything.

When it is hard to do right.

NOTE: Helps for Teachers of Beginners will not appear this month.

Suggested Audio and Visual Aids

Christian Growth Series, Junior III, Fourth Quarter

As We Grow Older

By BERNIECE SWARD

*Chairman Christian Growth Committee
Augustana Lutheran Audio-Visual Association*

LESSON 1

We Grow in Body

SVE Kodachrome Slides

Ha728. And Jesus Advanced in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favor With God and Men (Luke 2. 52).

Ha664. David Goes Out to Meet Goliath. (1 Samuel 17. 1-51.)

LESSON 2

We Work and Do Our Part

SVE Kodachrome Slide

Ha37. Jesus Washed the Feet of the Apostles. (John 13. 1-15.)

CATHEDRAL FILMSTRIP

Boyhood of Jesus, (St. Matthew), 35 frames. \$2.50.

LESSON 3

We Play Wisely

Filmstrips, Church Screen Production

Happy Times at Home, 30 frames, With manual, \$2.00. A story of three sisters sharing in household tasks; being thoughtful of others; joys of a Christian home.

LESSON 4

We Use Our Heads

SVE Kodachrome Slide

Ha727. Christ Among the Doctors. (Luke 2. 46.)

LESSON 5

We Obey the Rules

SVE Kodachrome Slide

Ha631. God Speaks to His People on Mount Sinai Through Moses. (Exodus 20. 1-21.)

S51. The Holy Ten Commandments.

LESSON 6

We Think of Others

Filmstrips, Church Screen Production

Friends Who Help Us, 30 frames. With manual, \$2.00. Its purpose is to lead the boys and girls to the many friends in the community who help them and shows how these friends are a part of God's plan for living.

LESSON 7

God Is in the World He Made

Motion Pictures, Church-Craft

This Is My Father's World, sound color, 10 minutes, rental, \$4.00.

God's Wonders in Your Own Backyard, sound color, 10 minutes, rental \$4.00.

LESSON 8

God Is in the Things Man Makes

Filmstrip, Church-Craft Productions.

Creation, First Article of Apostles' Creed, 50 frames, color, \$10.00.

LESSON 9

When Home Seems Different

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha598. The Call of Abraham.
(Genesis 12. 1-4.)Ha683. Naaman's Wife and the
Israelite Maid. (2 Kings 15. 2-3.)Ha622. Moses Found by Pharaoh's
Daughter. (Exodus 2. 5.)*Filmstrip, Church Screen Productions*The Christian Family, 40 frames,
With manual, \$2.50. How home
and family life can be made more
Christian. Family planning, work-
ing, playing, and worshipping to-
gether.

LESSON 10

When School Seems Different

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha666. The Friendship of David
and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18. 1.)Ha652. Ruth Remains with Naomi.
(Ruth 1. 14-18.)

LESSON 11

Times of Great Trouble

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha745. Consider the Lilies. (Mat-
thew 6. 28-34.)Ha93. The Good Shepherd. (John
10. 11-16.)

LESSON 12

How May I Grow More Like Jesus

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha75. Jesus a Good Friend. (Luke
10. 38.)Ha51. The Mission of the Apostles.
(Matthew 28. 18-20.)*Filmstrips, Church-Craft Productions*Redemption, Second Article of
Apostles' Creed, two filmstrips,
79 frames, \$6.00.

LESSON 13

Am I a Christian Now?

*SVE Kodachrome Slide*Ha732. Leaving All to Follow Christ.
(Matthew 4. 22.)*Christian Growth Series, Intermediate III,
Fourth Quarter**My Treasure Chest*

LESSON 1

What Do I Like?

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Cc328. Mary hath chosen the Better
Part. Seeger.Ha294. Martha and Mary (Luke
10. 40). Elsie Anna Wood.

LESSON 2

Why I Choose Jesus

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha28. Jesus and the Rich Young
Man. (Luke 18. 18-30.)Ha10. Christ and the Rich Young
Ruler. Clements.Cm919. St. Francis of Assisi (1182-
1226). Salentin.

LESSON 3

Some One Else in the Bible I Like

*SVE Kodachrome Slides*Ha598. The Call of Abraham.
(Genesis 12. 1-4.)Ha614. Joseph Made Governor in
Egypt. (Genesis 41. 37-45.)

- Ha632. Moses Pleads for Israel.
(Exodus 32. 11-14.)
- Ha656. Samuel Is Called by the Lord. (1 Samuel 3. 1-21.)
- Ha662. David Praising God. (1 Samuel 16. 17-23.)
- Ha679. God Speaks to Elijah. (1 Kings 19. 8-18.)
- Ha691. Isaiah the Great Prophet. (Isaiah 1. 1.)
- Ha22. "Behold the Lamb of God." (John 1. 29-36.)
- Ha90. Peter Preaching Christ Crucified. (Acts 2. 11-26.)
- Ha820. Paul Receives the Macedonian Call. (Acts 16. 9-10.)
- Ha653. Ruth in the Barley Field. (Ruth 2. 3.)
- Ha711. Queen Esther. (Esther 5. 1.)
- Ha807. Dorcas Helping the Needy. (Acts 9. 36-41.)
- Ha708. Daniel's Prayer. (Daniel 6. 10-11.)
- Ha683. Naaman's Wife and the Israelite Maid. (2 Kings 5. 2-3.)

LESSON 4

- Favorite Verses to Remember
- SVE Kodachrome Slide*
- Hc32. Open Bible.

LESSON 5

- Bible Stories I Like
- SVE Kodachrome Slides*
- Ha605. Esau Sells His Birthright to Jacob. (Genesis 25. 29-34.)
- Ha296. The Return of the Prodigal. (Luke 15. 20.)

LESSON 6

- My Favorite Psalm
- SVE Kodachrome Slide*
- Ha662. David Praising God. (1 Samuel 16. 17-23.)

LESSON 7

- A Chapter I Like
- SVE Kodachrome Slides*
- Ha72. The Sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 5. 6.)
- Ha707. Daniel Warning Belshazzar. (Daniel 5. 1-31.)
- Ha93. The Good Shepherd. (John 10. 11-16.)
- Ha831. Paul's Letter to Corinthians. (1 Corinthians 1. 10-13.)

LESSON 8

- The Gospel I Like Best
- SVE Kodachrome Slides*
- S21. Symbol of St. Matthew.
- S22. Symbol of St. Mark.
- S23. Symbol of St. Luke.
- S24. Symbol of St. John.

LESSON 9

- A Book of the Bible I Like
- SVE Kodachrome Slide*
- Ha713. Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall. (Nehemiah 4. 16.)

LESSON 10

- A Hymn I Like
- SVE Kodachrome Slide*
- Cc134. The Christus, Hofman.
- Filmstrips, Cathedral Films*
- Use Hymnstrips as class may suggest.

LESSON 11

- A Prayer to Use and Remember
- SVE Kodachrome Slides*
- Ha868. The Bedtime Prayer.
- Ha869. The Evening Prayer.
- Ha866. Boy Praying Before Meal.
- Ha867. Family Praying Before Meal.

LESSON 12

- Bible Pictures I Like
- SVE Kodachrome Slides*
- Cp72. "Tidings of Great Joy," Plockhorst.

Cc189. "The Arrival of the Shepherds," Lerolle.

Cc271. "Sistine Madonna," Raphael.

Cc130m. "Christ Among the Doctors," Hofmann.

Cc257. "Christ Blessing the Children," Plockhorst.

Cc131. "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler," Hofmann.

Cc482. "Christ and the Fishermen," Zimmerman.

Cc670. "The Last Supper," Leonardo da Vinci.

Cc133. "Christ in Gethsemane," Hofmann.

Cc89. "Holy Women at the Tomb," Ender.

Cc258. "The Good Shepherd," Plockhorst.

Cc161. "The Light of the World," Hunt.

Cc552. "The Hope of the World," Copping.

Cc495. "Follow Me," Burnand.

LESSON 13

What the Bible Means to Me

SVE Kodachrome Slide

Ha852. Universality of the Gospel. (Matthew 28. 19.)

Individual slides (all color) are fifty cents each in cardboard mounts.

Toronto Convention—You Can Attend by Proxy

So it will be impossible for you to attend the World Convention on Christian Education?

Thousands of other interested friends will be absent, too, but they have chosen a splendid way in which to share in the activities at Toronto, Canada, August 10-16, 1950. These non-attending persons will be *fraternal delegates* and *proxy hosts* at the convention. By paying the minimum fee of \$1.00 they are contributing to the general fund which will make it possible to bring foreign delegates to Toronto. These friends must come long distances from war-impooverished areas where the Christian forces are small in number. They need our aid if they are

to travel to the convention and then return to their own lands with inspiration and information for the *global* task of Christian education.

Do you want to participate in this endeavor? You may do so by sending money order or check to: World Council of Christian Education, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

Whenever a group of 25 enroll *together*, that group will receive a filmstrip portrayal of the convention.

Sunday school pupils, too, will be thrilled to act as *proxy hosts* to foreign Sunday school leaders. This could be a project with rich spiritual blessing in your school.

Activities

in the Field of Christian Education

By I. O. NOTHSTEIN

Trends in Christian Education in Protestantism. The words at the beginning of this paragraph formed the theme of an address delivered at the Chicago meeting of the Lutheran Boards of Christian Education by Dr. Gerald Knoff, associate general secretary of the International Council of Religious Education. He outlined four major trends: A new appreciation of Christian heritage and beliefs, blending of evangelistic zeal and educational techniques, a stronger emphasis on the place and importance of the family in Christian education, and the growing recognition of the need for co-operative enterprises in Christian education. Dr. Knoff has correctly summed up all the trends in present-day Protestant religious education would appear that that enterprise is on the right road to gain its ends, for all of these advances are along one and thoroughly Biblical paths. *Forward in Parish Education.* The Boards of Parish Education have decided that the theme for

Parish Education Month in 1950 shall be, "Forward in Parish Education. Come, Learn, Serve with Us." This theme, the poster, and some of the promotional material will be used by all of the churches within the National Lutheran Council.

Most Revolutionary Venture. Describing the present system of religious education used by the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., a writer in the *Christian Century* terms it "the most revolutionary large-scale venture in Christian education ever undertaken by an American Protestant denomination." The article is a report on the progress of the experiment, now in its second year of operation, and the writer considers it quite successful.

The gist of the new plan is that parents shall assume and discharge specific weekly responsibilities in the Christian teaching of their children, instead of unloading these responsibilities on the Church as

the institution that is "supposed to do it."

With the official approval of the church's General Assembly, the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., abandoned its entire former set of graded materials fourteen months ago, at a time when they were gaining in circulation, and launched out on a wholly fresh course. This decision involved immense labors of preparation. It cost several million dollars. Even the most sanguine advocates of the new curriculum were anxious about its success. Would modern parents refuse to do anything about their children's religious education? Would the churches subscribe for the rather expensive materials? Instructional materials for the parents to use at home, a series of graded reading and reference books for the pupils which go into homes and become a permanent part of a cumulative home library of Christian source materials, and assistance to teachers in the form of a quarterly 64-page magazine were provided at a cost to the average school of about \$3.50 per pupil, or roughly three times the cost of the former materials.

A summary of the success of the plan as far as the use of the mater-

ials is concerned states that over 5,300 Presbyterian U. S. A., churches are now using the new materials, and that 83 per cent of the churches using the system provide the magazine, the most expensive part of the supplies at a cost of \$1.80 a year, for all the parents. In consequence of this favorable response the cost of the magazine for the second year could be reduced forty cents. Also some 1,200 churches of other communions are said to have adopted the new program.

Parents Are Aware

As to parent co-operation, the writer reports that getting a curriculum into the hands of people is not tantamount to its sustained effective use or the realization of its underlying aims. Not all parents who receive the magazine are consistently reading it and doing the things suggested with their children, probably not even a majority of parents, although it is almost impossible to secure exact figures on parent participation affecting over 500,000 homes. It is believed that most parents of children through the primary age do some reading of the books with their youngsters, and that even the most indifferent parents can not be totally unaware of the children's religi-

ous reading books entering the home.

The books, departmentally graded, unfold a three-year cycle of annual themes on the life of Christ, the story of the Bible, and the history of the church.

"Within this framework essential Christian content is given, according to the age and capacities of the pupils, but always from the angle that this is God's truth for Christian living, not just so much informational matter to be mastered.

"The older the child, the harder it is to secure parent partnership

in his Christian training, for numerous fairly patent reasons. Yet not a few parents of junior, junior-high and senior-young-people pupils are known to urge their offspring to 'do their homework,' and have openly or surreptitiously read their children's books to improve their own dim knowledge of the subjects treated.

"The churches are wisely not expecting 100 per cent parent cooperation overnight. They recognize that this is a long haul and every inch of it uphill, when one scans the pagan lay of the land in our time."

Prayer, the Soul's Breath

Christian Growth Series, Primary III, Fourth Quarter

By BIRDINE PETERSON

Field Worker, Board of Parish Education

Augustana Lutheran Church

THERE was a hushed silence in the room. The men sat motionless and mute. The first meeting of the church council was nearing conclusion. The pastor had just made the simple request: "Will one of you men please close with a word of prayer?" No man lifted his voice. Finally after a somewhat long and almost unbear-

able silence one of the men placed his hand on the pastor's arm and in a husky voice said, "Pastor, we're all behind you, but *we don't know how to pray!*"

Why was it that these leaders of the church, who undoubtedly had been discussing the weighty problems of the congregation, found themselves utterly unable to bow

before the throne of Grace in the presence of their co-workers, and ask the direction and blessing of the triune God upon their endeavors? Was it not because as *children* they had not been trained to talk to God in the presence of others as freely as they talked to one another? In the next generation will a similar incident occur in some of our church councils because you and I, as teachers, have failed in our responsibility?

In every church school session we are or should be developing a deeper prayer life in our pupils. Is not one of the "Desired Outcomes of Christian Education" that the child grow in "Use of Christian resources: earnest, unaffected prayer"?

If we are to teach our children to pray prayer must be as natural and vital in our lives as breathing itself.

"From time immemorial prayer has been spoken of as the breath of the soul. And the figure is an excellent one, indeed.

"The air which our body requires envelops us on every hand. The air itself seeks to enter our bodies and, for this reason, exerts pressure on us. It is well known that it is more difficult to hold one's breath than it is to breathe.

We need but exercise our organs of respiration and the air will enter forthwith into our lungs and perform its life-giving function to the entire body.

"Prayer is the breath of the soul, the organ by which we receive Christ into our parched and withered hearts.

"The air which our souls need also envelops us at all times and on all sides. God is round about in Christ on every hand, with his many-sided and all-sufficient grace. All we need to do is to open our hearts.

"He says, 'If any man open the door, I will come into him.'

"Notice carefully every word here. It is not our prayer which draws Jesus into our hearts. Nor is it our prayer which moves Jesus to come to us.

"All he needs is access. He enters in of his own accord, because he desires to come in. And he enters in wherever he is not denied admittance. As air enters in quietly when we breathe, and does its normal work in our lungs, so Jesus enters quietly into our hearts and does his blessed work there." Hallesby, "*Prayer*."

In years to come will some primary child say of you and me, "I learned of him to pray"?